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- An interpretation of John Greenleaf Whittier's life and poetry appears on Page 3. Benson Y. Landis, contributor of this article, is a member of the Advisory Committee of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH and was formerly its editor.
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A Mission in Maine*

TERTIUS VAN DYKE

• The Maine Sea Coast Missionary Society is an interdenominational, voluntarily supported Mission. It was established in Bar Harbor in 1905 in response to the needs of the neglected and isolated folk of the Sea Coast and because its founders believed that the Gospel should be brought to these unchurched people in word and deed.

The Early Days

The MacDonald brothers, Angus, pastor of a Bar Harbor Congregational Church, and Alexander, pastor of the nearby Seal Harbor Church, were among the founders, the only survivor of whom is Thomas Searles, treasurer of the Mission from its beginning. Alexander MacDonald became the first missionary pastor, sailing first in a friendship sloop, *The Hope,* later in a small converted power yacht, *The Morning Star,* and finally in *Sunbeam I,* the first boat built for the Mission and presented to it by Mrs. John S. Kennedy, a summer resident of Bar Harbor.

My connection with the Mission dates from 1912 when I was invited to join Mr. MacDonald on a summer cruise on *Sunbeam I.*

One story of the cruise I will tell you. We landed one stormy night and walked up a muddy road to a little one-room schoolhouse to conduct a service. The lantern was hung in the rafters, the song books distributed on the benches, and we waited for the congregation. They straggled in—two girls with the rain running down their hair, several fishermen in oil-skins and boots, a group of women all bundled up, several old fellows serious and hobbling a bit. Finally two or three little boys scuttled in and sat in the front seats. MacDonald began as always with a song service. Then he picked up his Bible and opened it saying, "I will read you the story of blind Bartimaeus." Instantly there was a commotion on the front bench and one little boy was waving his hand for attention. "Well," said MacDonald kindly, "what is it?" The boy slid to his feet and with some hesitation and mispronouncements of words recited perfectly the whole story. "Amen," said MacDonald, "the Lord bless the hearing of his Word read from the tablets of a child's heart," and went on to preach with his usual fervor and directness.

You see, the weekly Sunday school which MacDonald made a requirement for a monthly visit from the Mission was bearing fruit.

Forty Years Later

This same tone and spirit carries on in the Mission forty years later. There have been many changes: no more schooners, no more coastal steamers; the Coast Guard has taken

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Photo by A. Devaney, N. Y.

* Told to the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, Springfield, Mass., October 18, 1955.

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over the light house service; lobsters and herring and ground fish are pursued more efficiently with better craft and gear. But the human problem is the same and the Gospel is still applicable in terms of words and deeds.

The Rev. Neal D. Bousfield, a graduate of Colby College and an honorary D.D. of his Alma Mater, has been superintendent of the Mission for the past twenty years. With him is a staff of twelve workers who are scattered along the rocky coast. *The Sunbeam III,* a sturdy 150 horsepower, diesel engined 72-foot boat shod with green-heart for ice breaking, is in action all year round with a three-man crew: Captain Bill Berry, Engineer Ray Colburn, and Steward and Cook Eddy Coston. To be aboard the *Sunbeam* is a Christian experience in itself. The friendliness, the warmth and the eagerness of crew and staff makes the day a blessing.

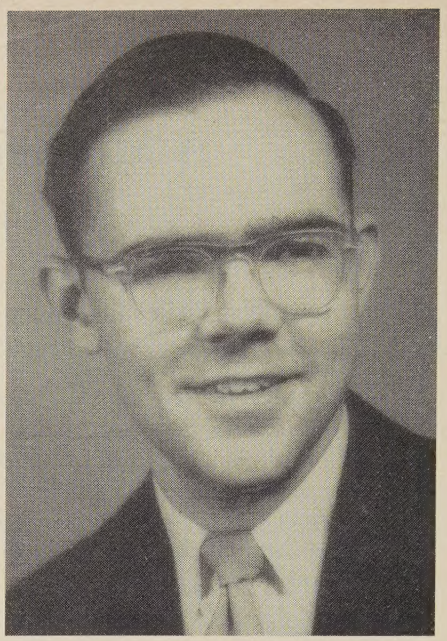
And the people for whom they work, the rugged people of a perilous but beautiful coast, are ever fascinating.

I was landed one overhung dismal winter day to walk across an island for a visit on a shut-in. A young fellow at the wharf volunteered to go along to show me the best way through the slushy paths. On the way we met an old fellow walking with a stick and wearing dark glasses. "Hey Uncle Joe, what you want to wear them things for today?" said my companion. Uncle Joe turned around: "So I can't see too far into the future, young feller," said he with a grin.

These coastal people are real people. They deserve and they need the Gospel.

The 1956 Convocation

• The 1956 National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held at St. Louis, Missouri, October 30-November 1. From time to time announcements will be made in this journal concerning the plans and the program.



RONALD AUSTIN

A Yale Student Speaks

• Early last spring arrangements were made by the National Council of Churches' Department of Town and Country Church for a Yale University theological student to spend the three summer months working with the Rev. V. A. Edwards in Alabama, this to be a part of the Department's extension work at Tuskegee Institute. The student chosen for this assignment was Ronald Austin and, according to all reports, he was very helpful in assisting with "pastors' schools, Vacation Bible Schools, a five-county church study, and community councils."

Of his experiences, Ronald Austin says:

"Since my appointment to the Religious Extension Service as a summer worker was intended to provide a training period, I shall mention what seem to me to be the chief values of my summer's experience:

"1. I was able to become well acquainted with one phase of the National Council's work with rural churches. I believe that this part of my program was carried through with admirable consistency, and I especially appreciated the efforts of my supervisor to introduce me to all phases of the work. I feel that actual participation in the work provided me with knowledge and insights as to the National Council and its work which I could have gained in no other way.

"2. I had an opportunity to learn something about Tuskegee Institute and the work which it carries on. Since Tuskegee is something of a center for rural work, I believe that the chance to work there was especially valuable. Over the course of the summer, I was introduced to the work of the Rural Life Council and the Agricultural Extension Service.

"3. Through my regular work this summer, I was able to learn of the work and the problems of the rural Negro churches. Again I would say that this short time spent on the field has been of far more value to me than any amount of reading or study I might have done. I was especially glad for the chance to make the acquaintance of Negro ministers and work with them."

The Christian Farmer and His Government

• Announcement is made by the Department of Church and Economic Life, National Council of Churches, that there will again be a seminar in Washington, D. C., on "The Christian Farmer and his Government."

The dates are JANUARY 24-26. As for several years past, the program will consist of informal talks with representatives of farm organizations, officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, members of congressional committees on agriculture, officers of the Food and Agriculture Organization. The members of the seminar will learn about farm programs and policies, and how and where they are determined. The seminar is primarily for operating farmers, but ministers and others interested also attend.

You may secure further information from your denominational secretary for social education and action or from the Reverend Cameron P. Hall, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

John Greenleaf Whittier

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• When John Greenleaf Whittier's poems were published in book form by Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston, in 1894, they made a volume of almost 500 pages in fine print, with two columns to a page. Whittier was born in 1807, two years before Abraham Lincoln, and died in 1892. He was of Quaker birth, and spent his youth on the homestead near Haverhill, Massachusetts, a house that is preserved today. He was conscious of the Puritan heritage of Massachusetts, and some of his poetry has an anti-clerical tinge. However, he was not incapable of recognizing the milk of human kindness in persons who disagreed with him.

Whittier was also an anti-slavery poet, and his lines were at times too militant for some of his co-religionists. He sang of honorable labor, which he himself experienced. He also knew poverty, and specifically what it meant to have no money to buy warm clothes in New England winters. He is famed for his poems of nature, and for innumerable highly personal verses. He had a keen sense of American democratic movements. And many of his poems became hymns, as we have noted in an article, "Hymns From the Country." He himself professed no knowledge of music, but he put the title of hymns on some of his poems.

Much of Whittier's poetry has "local color." He threw a "graceful veil of poetry and legend over the country of his daily life." Most of the locale he dealt with was that of Essex County, Massachusetts, and the section lying between Newberryport and Portsmouth, N. H. Like Robert P. Tristram Coffin, Whittier got many of his poems from the people, and transmuted homely tales into beautiful rhythm. He wrote long poems, and he endeavored to be clear. (I have heard that modern poets tend to write their verses short and obscure.) Whittier's poems are too long for popular consumption today, and his hymns in wide use are only portions of long poems. "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" is an example.

There was a generation or two in the public schools that grew up on "Snowbound." I was part of one. I suppose that his vigorous praise of Barbara Frietchie made that poem as well known as any other.

"Snowbound" is a "winter idyl," and is dedicated to the memory of his own household, which included one lovely young woman who was a "not unfeared, half-welcome guest." She was really "notorious"—she could exhort at school-house prayer meetings, and also dance at balls in Washington.

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon . . .

I have been in Frederick, Maryland, several times and entered the home of Barbara Frietchie, which is a museum there. Barbara was one of the oldest residents in Frederick town, and the encounter of the brave woman with a brave soldier named Stonewall Jackson provides the stirring scene of the lively poem. Barbara Frietchie was no legend, but it seems that one other person flew the stars and stripes, and what words Stonewall used as he met the situation were not recorded. But Whit-

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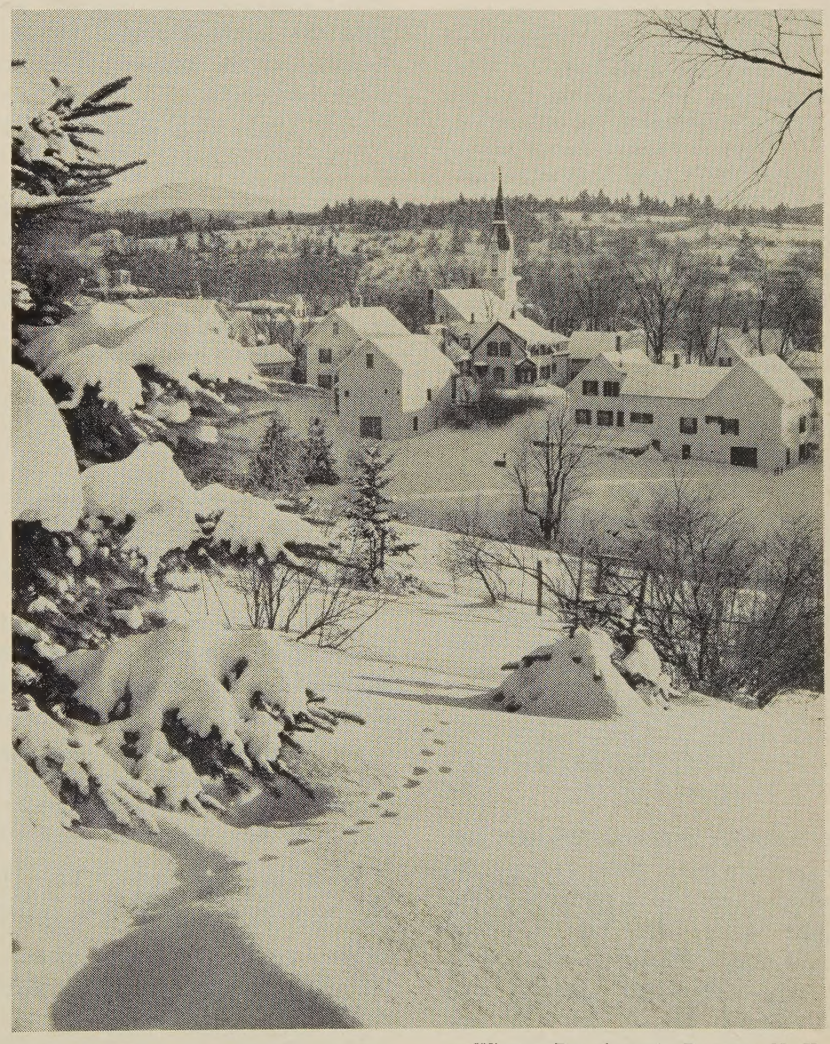

Winston Pote from A. Devaney, N. Y.

(*Continued from Page 3*)

tier's poetic quotations have had a long life.

"Shoot, if you must, this old grey head,
But spare your country's flag," she said . . .
"Who touches a hair of yon grey head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said . . .
And ever the stars above look down
On the stars below in Frederick town!

Whittier's poems on democracy include a message "to the 39th Congress:"

O people-chosen! are you not
Likewise the chosen of the Lord,
To do His will and speak His word? . . .
Make all men peers before the law
Take hands from off the Negro's throat,
Give black and white an equal vote . . .

He introduces a poem headed simply "Democracy" with a line from *Matthew* VII: 12: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." He closes with these words:

Not to these altars of a day,
At party's call, my gift I bring;
But on thy olden shrine I lay
A freeman's dearest offering:
The voiceless utterance of his will—
His pledge to freedom and to truth,
That manhood's heart remembers still
The homage of his generous youth.

On July 4, 1883, Whittier read a poem, "Our Country," at Woodstock, Connecticut, a good Yankee town in the Northeast corner of the state, where the late Hamilton Holt, Editor of *The Independent,* and President of Rollins College, later had a home.

We give thy natal day hope,
O country of our love and prayer!
Thy way is down no fatal slope
But up to freer sun and air.

The anti-slavery poems were numerous. One on "The Kansas Emigrants" began:

We cross the prairie as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free!

On another occasion Whitter put into poetry a letter from a clergyman favoring slavery to a politician. For straight satire, this was a distinguished poem. When Abraham Lincoln countermanded General Fremont's order freeing slaves in one section, because he thought the proclamation premature, Whittier wrote a tribute to Fremont, beginning:

Thy error, Fremont, simply was to act
A brave man's part, without the statesman's tact,
And taking counsel but of common sense,
To strike at cause as well as consequence . . .

Whittier became sarcastic, too, in a poem, "Clerical Oppressors." Yet he could close the poem with a positive appeal to the clergy criticized:

Oh, speed the moment on
When wrong shall cease, and liberty and love
And truth and right throughout the earth be known
As in their home above.

In a poem, "The Minister's Daughter," Whittier tells about a stern sermon in which it was stated that all but a chosen few would go to "quenchless burning." After the service the minister walked into an orchard and asked his daughter to behold the apple blossoms, as of the "garden of the Lord." The daughter's reply was:

Oh, father! these pretty blossoms
Are very wicked, I think.

Through many stanzas a change is recorded in the preacher:

Thereafter his hearers noted
In his prayers a tenderer strain,
And never the gospel of hatred
Burned on his lips again.

The poet mellowed in "Lines from a Letter to a Young Clerical Friend," closing, as follows:

That day when fettered limb and mind
Shall know the truth which maketh free,
And he alone who loves his kind
Shall, childlike, claim the love of Thee!

Whittier wrote poems to and of shoemakers, fishermen, lumbermen, shipbuilders, drovers, huskers. One to the shoemakers began:

Ho! workers of the old time styled
The gentle craft of leather!
Young brothers of the ancient guild,
Stand forth once more together!

Whittier once wrote "The Healer," to a young physician, concluding:

So shalt thou be with power endued
From Him who went about
The Syrian hillsides doing good,
And casting demons out.

World Day of Prayer

• On Friday, February 17 (the first Friday of Lent), thousands of Christians in the United States and around the world will be united in prayers of adoration and thanksgiving. This is the seventieth year of the observance in the United States.

The purpose of the Day is to unite all Christians in a bond of prayer and to make an offering for Christian Missions at home and abroad. The offering is divided between the Division of Foreign Missions and the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., who use it to educate Christian leaders and provide literacy material for the people of the Orient, and to provide religious and social ministry for migratory labor, American Indians and minority groups in the United States and its possessions.

Each year the National World Day of Prayer Committee of United Church Women invites one or more women from a chosen country to write an order of service for the day. The 1956 service comes from Cook Training School for Indian Christian leaders in Phoenix, Arizona—a school which receives a part of the World Day of Prayer Offering each year. This leaflet may be procured from the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches, 120 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N. Y., for five cents per copy, or $4.00 per 100 copies. A basic packet of materials has been prepared for the observance of this day, which sells for fifty cents per packet. No shipment of materials will be made after February 3rd.

Benediction

Bleak acres brown; Trees naked and alone;
A leaden sky; An ancient crumbling wall;
Stark hilltops rupt by timber seeking God;
And then the swirling snowflakes start to fall.

The sordid, graying landscape they dissolve.
The thin guant trees are edged with silver froth.
The once brown fields, now clean and gleaming white,
Are spread with God's unblemished altar cloth.

—Daniel Novotny
Gotham, New Hampshire

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RICHARD O. COMFORT
Executive Director, Department of the Town and Country Church

RUTH B. ROBINSON
Editor

Advisory Committee

BENSON Y. LANDIS

ALICE MALONEY

E. W. MUELLER

Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

You Can Do It Too

JAMES D. WYKER

• A rural community called Kipton engaged in a social and religious survey one afternoon, and before the workers went to bed that night more than three hundred homes had participated in the enlivening event. Yes, it was *enlivening* for both surveyors and surveyees. Church attendance was up the following Sunday, even though the workers had been carefully instructed to refrain from asking anyone to come to church—they had been trained to approach their neighbors as neighbors should.

Jack Short, the new student minister at the Kipton church, had prepared the community for the survey while he was getting settled. After discussing the proposal with the church leaders, Jack had a committee prepare a map on which every home was numbered. A master list was made up from the chart and a card was made for each family. A circle was drawn around twelve to twenty houses on the map and these cards became the assignment for a competent family within the circle. By this system neighbor called on neighbor. The result was that not one family refused to cooperate. In fact, many an interview would have been prolonged too long had not the worker been warned to excuse himself and go along to the next neighbor. We do like to talk about ourselves—that is what good neighbors do.

The Portraits

The instruction period—which took two hours—consisted of a discussion of technique as well as a clarification of the questions on the "key" to the survey card. One could feel a sense of satisfaction when this step was completed, for it was the first time that any one of the workers had made a portrait of his own household. The information desired included the name of each member of the family, age, grades of school children, type of employment, church attendance and membership, frequency of church attendance, stewardship, leadership, tenure, age grouping, training, interests, membership in local organizations, and opinions on local issues.

In order to obtain first-hand experience, the writer of this report took cards for a neighborhood. One housewife seemed to enjoy the discussion which the questions stimulated, so I said: "Why do I have these cards instead of you?" Whereupon she took cards for ten of her neighbors and went to work at once.

The persons managing the survey had launched the project with prayer and meditation but they still wondered how the Catholic and Baptist families would react. There had been considerable "buzzing," so we decided to make the calls without any regard for denominational cleavages.

Before the young minister could finish his supper, the workers were arriving with happy stories: "Call on this family right away." "The Baptists were wonderful." A string of workers sat on the porch railing—tarrying to see what incoming workers would have to report. Yes, they knew that a new family had moved into the neighborhood, but they had never called before as neighbors should. Before the evening was over, three people were cutting holes into slots on the punch-system survey cards. (When holes are marked "positive" they are cut into slots and the cards can be quickly sorted by running a wire through the cards at any particular character.) It was a little after midnight before the last worker left.

The Next Step

Many surveys have been made and placed on a shelf, but not at Kipton. By Monday morning every question on all the three hundred cards had been recorded on each of three mas-

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ter correlation charts: 1) Church attendance; 2) Age group; 3) Occupation. These items were subdivided. For example, down the left side of the chart, horizontally, were items for church attendance: "Kipton," "Baptist," "Catholic," "Other," "None." Across the top of the chart the other thirty-nine items were listed on perpendicular lines. As each hole was sifted the totals were listed in the spaces made by the intersecting lines. Over six hundred statistical facts were listed on the tables. But statistics are useless until they are interpreted.

Just as each card is a portrait of a family, so the tables portray the community. The church that sponsored this community study was naturally interested in knowing that there were 193 persons over twelve years of age unchurched. The church youth group can obtain the name of every other young person for its prospect list. The women's organization can find the names of women who are "left out." And not only will the church find this information helpful, but every other organization in the community has access to it, too. The Farm Bureau can sift the cards for non-members, as can the Garden Club and the Grange.

It is obvious that some community problems should be solved by churches and community agencies cooperatively. At Kipton we found that many young people of school age were without any organized community activity. Other community problems were alcohol, sanitation, week-day religious education, and leadership training.

Some of the important factors at Kipton are: A rapid influx of non-farm families, nearly a tenth of the families having lived in the community for less than one year. Ownership of homes runs above eighty percent for both farm and non-farm families. The community is using too few of its college-trained people. Oldsters may be as much of a community concern as youngsters—there are now two adults for every child and youth, but the situation will soon change for young couples are moving into the community.

Two weeks after the survey was made fourteen leaders of the Kipton organizations were called together so that the information on the three tabulation charts might be explained to them. Of course, the presentation, as one of them remarked, was a "mental avalanche." The need for recreational facilities was an immediate concern of the group.

Implementation

If one dares to turn his thinking from 600 statistics to two predictions, those two predictions would be: 1) Not only will church attendance keep on increasing but the laity will make their respective secular organizations serve more people with grater efficiency; and 2) a community council will be set up by the leaders so that they can turn statistics into a living instrument for community betterment. Public opinion will back one improvement after another. The people will learn that the more things they do together, the more things they *can* do together. What an opportunity for the young minister and the members of his church!

The Chairman's Corner

ADVANTAGES OF THE LARGER PARISH

• There is a growing demand throughout the nation for a comprehensive, cooperative town and country church program to meet the needs of all the people in the rapidly expanding rural community. The Larger Parish program has demonstrated its worth at this point. Some of its many advantages are:

1. The basic objective is to serve all the unmet needs of the community without reference to denomination, sect, or creed. It is concerned with all the people and their interests in a better life and their desire to build a Christian community. It endeavors to cooperate effectively with all worthy organizations and agencies for the enrichment of community life.

2. It enables the small church, through cooperation with other churches, to have an effective program. Strength and power come through such united effort.

3. The Larger Parish makes possible a strong specialized and diversified multiple ministry. In addition to a preaching ministry, the parish may (through the pooling of its resoures) have a staff of specialists in such fields as Christian education, music, youth work, and evangelism to provide a rich religious leadership to the community.

4. The Larger Parish gives a greater challenge and inspiration to well-trained ministerial leadership to come to the job and stay with it. It guarantees a sustained leadership for the churches.

5. The Larger Parish builds strong Christian morale and enthusiasm on the part of the people. It gives the churches greater strength for exerting power for good both in the local community and in the larger community. They are big enough to undertake and do big things together.

6. The Larger Parish challenges larger interests outside the community, state and national organizations in agriculture, forestry, soil conservation, education, and the church, to assist such programs since such organizations are greatly interested in large cooperative community programs.

7. The Larger Parish commends itself since it is an easy form of interdenominational cooperative organization. No one of the denominations cooperating loses any of its own denominational identity or autonomy, yet it destroys church competition.

8. The zealous enthusiasm engendered by the Larger Parish program results in rapid increase in church membership and attendance at all church functions. In many instances benevolences and local church support have trebbled within a very few years. The church buildings and properties have been improved, enlarged, and beautified. The churches receive more publicity through the press, radio, and TV. The church feels a new life and power surging through it and pushes out into new relationships. The Larger Parish promises a new day for the town and country church.

—Henry S. Randolph

Rural Church Welfare Services*

• The social needs of rural America vary greatly from community to community. If the Church wishes to come to grips with the task of adequately ministering to the welfare needs of rural people, it will need to study the many different situations of need in town and country. Some of these are the following:

1. The decline of the population in certain rural areas places an added burden on the remaining people to meet social needs.

2. The rapid increase of the nonfarm population in other areas overtaxes the limited resources of these communities.

3. In rural America we also find groups which have unique social needs, because of occupational patterns or because of historical development. These would include such groups as the Negro, the Indian, and the Spanish American.

4. A group with unusually critical problems are the more than 1,000,000 persons who are agricultural migrants. About half of these persons move about as families; the other half are aliens, males, who move about for harvesting. Their living conditions are almost universally described as unsatisfactory, even chaotic. They are residents at any one place for only a short time. They are often unserved and not wanted in the communities where they work. Their children seldom attend schools. They seldom attend churches.

5. The aged are over-represented and largely dependent in rural America. In 1945, the Social Security Administration reported in a special study (not since repeated) that the 2,800 counties outside the metropolitan areas aided 59 per cent of all recipients of old age assistance, although they had only about one-half the estimated total population aged 65 years and over in continental United States. The absence of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance, at the time, for farm people and laborers was probably one factor in explaining why a higher proportion of rural than of urban older people were in need.

6. Dependent children are similarly present in the rural community.

In the face of such needs, many rural communities are without adequate welfare services. There is a lack of social concern on the part of church members. This may result in the community manifesting an unwillingness to provide the necessary social services. It may also result in a resistance to the use of the resources that are available.

Hence, there will be need for every community periodically to take an inventory of unmet needs. In this self study, the Church can be a powerful motivating force.

Situation of the Rural Church

Probably considerably more than half of the local churches of all faiths in the nation are found in communities with less than 2,500 population, but these churches have only about one-third of the church members in the nation.

Thus there are numerous small churches, and it is often said that they are "too small." Indeed, there may be two local churches for every Protestant rural minister. In this situation, what can be expected or hoped for, in the rural churches, in relation to social welfare? How can a local church with one hundred members—which describes many rural units—carry on an effective program? Some churches have found the answer in larger parish organization, council of churches, or other types of group approaches to welfare problems.

The churches serve certain social welfare needs of the rural and urban people through numerous institutions—hospitals and homes for the aged and agencies for children. These are maintained and supported by units larger than local parishes. Although these institutions are available to eligible church members in both rural and urban communities, the question may be raised whether they are not often more accessible to the urban constituencies.

The rural minister is a citizen and often in a position to be of special service on boards of directors of both public and private agencies. Who would think of raising money for social welfare without some attention to the enlistment of ministers?

Equally important is the community role of the lay leaders in the local church who often assist the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Rural YMCA, the Scouts, the child welfareworker, the administrator of public assistance. Frequently this service is rendered without much thought or recognition of the fact that the churches are rendering community service of first importance. Nor must we overlook the contribution that local churches make in developing socially-minded Christian laymen, who support the professional leaders in achieving these objectives.

Many churches do some informal, or unorganized, social work. Probably most churches carry on some recreation, usually not highly organized. Some churches have emergency funds that may be used for the relief of the needy. Some of this informal and unpublished mutual aid is nevertheless of significance in community life and is a practical witness.

How Should Rural Churches Support the Social Welfare?

Churches should understand that their own administrative and organizational structure often divides the community and promotes social disorganization with the consequent personal and familial disorganization and delinquency. A multiplicity of small and competing congregations exhausts wealth and talent and effectually prevents the integration of community resources in meeting human needs. Churches have remedied this situation by organizing with other churches in ministerial associations, councils of churches, larger parishes and group ministries. They have combined to work with other community agencies in a community council. Through such liai-

(*Continued on Page* 12)

* From a report, made for the National Conference on the Churches and Social Welfare, 1955.

From the National Convocation on the Church in Town an

The Lord's Acre Movement

• The year 1955 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of The Lord's Acre Movement, one of the projects of the Religious Department of the Farmers Federation, Asheville, North Carolina, of which Dr. Dumont Clarke, an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is director. The Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, took pleasure in honoring this Movement at the Springfield, Massachusetts, Convocation. Certificates of merit were presented to Dr. Clarke—and to four representative leaders of the Movement in the New England area. These were the Rev. Robert Brightman of Colrain, Massachusetts; the Rev. A. Raymond Smith of Fort Fairfield, Maine; the Rev. Thomas H. Hedges of Barnard Center, Vermont; and Mr. Donald T. Hall of Monroe, New Hampshire. After the citations were read and certificates presented, the guests told about specific Lord's Acre projects in their respective New England states.

Lord's Acre Awards

From left to right: Dr. Dumont Clarke, A. Raymond Smith, Thomas H. Hedges, Robert Brightman, and Donald T. Hall

Richard O. Comfort, newly appointed Executive Director of the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, is greeted by the Department's Chairman, Henry S. Randolph

Agricultural Missions

• Another twenty-fifth anniversary which the National Convocation "recognized" was that of the founding of Agricultural Missions, Incorporated. During its twenty-five years of operation, Agricultural Missions has established and sponsored training courses for rural leadership; it has counselled on training development; has recruited young people for Agricultural Mission service; and it has encouraged creative and pioneer projects for the improvement of village life around the world.

From the time Agricultural Missions was organized until three years ago, the director of this organization was Dr. John H. Reisner, who for nearly twenty years had been associated with the College of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Nanking, in China. He was first a member of its faculty, and later its Dean.

ry, Held at Springfield, Massachusetts, October 18-20, 1955

Since Doctor Reisner's retirement in 1952, the activities of this great religious organization have been directed by Dr. Ira W. Moomaw, an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren who has spent many years of his life in India as an agricultural missionary.

Dr. Moomaw was unable to attend the Convocation at Springfield, but certificates of merit were awarded to both of the directors of Agricultural Missions.

John H. Reisner and Henry S. Randolph

The Convocation Honors Rural Laity

• For several years the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country has featured a service for the recognition of representative rural lay persons in the area in which the Convocation has been held. At Springfield certificates of merit were presented to eleven persons in the New England area "in recognition of those many thousands of rural people who exalt Christ through Christian family life, through Christian relations in business and politics, and whose services and support keep the town and country churches functioning effectively."

(*Continued on Page* 10)

Dr. Max F. Abell of Durham, N. H., outstanding layman in the Congregational-Christian Church is presented certificate of merit by Dr. Henry S. Randolph, Chairman of the National Council's Department of Town and Country Church. Dr. Abell has but recently retired from active service as agricultural economist of the Rural Extension Division of the University of New Hampshire

(*Continued from Page 9*)

Four of those who received certificates of merit are members of Methodist churches; two of Baptist; two of Congregational-Christian; one of United Presbyterian; and two of Presbyterian U.S.A. They are as follows: Lester R. Lewis, Strong, Maine; Van B. Hopps, Colrain, Massachusetts; Chester D. Noyes, Colebrook, New Hampshire; Helen C. Stickney, North Sebago, Maine; Leon S. Gay, Brandon, Vermont; Mrs. Roy J. Estey, Turnbridge, Vermont; Dr. Max Abell, Durham, New Hampshire; Philip Hodgdon, Randolph Center, Vermont; Lewis Chamberlain, Wells River, Vermont; and Mr. and Mrs. John Wickham of Cutchogue, New York.

Just Off the Press

• Three new printed guides for citizen groups and other voluntary organizations have just come off the press of the non-profit Adult Education Association of the U.S.A.

First of a new Leadership Pamphlet Series, they are:

No. 1—*How to Lead Discussions:* A "how to" manual for successful discussion groups—organizing meetings, sharing responsibilities, airing program ideas, use of drama, handling question-answer periods, and other discussion problems.

No. 2—*Planning Better Programs:* Ways to eliminate obstacles, plan program content, discover group interests, set up goals, handle speakers or panels and get maximum participation.

No. 3—*Taking Action in the Community:* A practical guide to initiating community action, enlisting neighbors and community organizations, overcoming apathy, translating ideas into action, and meeting attacks from outside sources.

The 48-page pamphlets are adapted from materials originally published in Adult Leadership, monthly publication of the AEA at 743 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago 11. The pamphlets are 60 cents each, any two for $1.00, and 40 cents each for three to 24 copies.

The Convocation Worship Services

• The worship services at the 1955 Convocation on the Church in Town and Country were conducted by the Rev. Frederick W. Alden, minister of the New Hampshire Congregational-Christian Conference, and Mr. Hobart Mitchell, director of "Chancel," a newly-formed organization which offers good sacred music, through the use of record players, to small rural churches that are otherwise unable to provide good inspirational music for their people. The worship service given below was used at one of the Convocation sessions:

Theme: On Awaiting Outcomes

Organ Prelude

Introit Hear, O Israel, for the Lord thy God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul and mind and strength.

Invocation Let us pray: O Lord our God, we acknowledge thy steadfast purpose to restore all things as at the first, to bring all things under to gather into one the scattered people of God. We bless thee that the things by which we are shaped and trained have eternal meaning; the end being in the way we take; the way we take through earth, through town, through work, through love. Grant us grace to yield ourselves as channels, giving the sanction of place and power to thy kingdom and its claims in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

Organ Selection

Scripture Reading *Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he said, 'No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"*

It is the end alone which discloses all things, separating the wheat from the tares; distinguishing the real from the sham, the genuine from the false. Meanwhile we are not to lose sight of distinctions, to confuse real and sham, right and wrong. Nor are we to assume that we know everything; denying parched tares growing where we did not recognize their presence, wheat yielding fruit where we did not know it. Let them grow until the harvest, the one necessary to the other, the one not to be disturbed without harm to the other. Let them grow together.

If you can wait, you shall see the wheat outlast the tares, the one going from life to life, the other going from life to nothingness; wheat proving itself for gathering; tares ending in destruction.

If you can wait, your faith in a distinction between the two will be upheld. Your labors will be shown to be jus-

tified. Your sacrifices will prove meaningful and your hope and confidence supported, at long last, but only if you can wait.

Prayer Oh Lord, our God, we raise before thee the faintheartedness, fear and anxiety which do not dare to trust the larger hope.

We confess an impatience that wants the accounts settled each night; to bear no seeming injustice, and unfairness remaining to unbalance the day; an impatience which thinks if we were God or could do things, we could do better.

We lift our absorption in the present, its darknesses, its despair, its confusions, its tragic mistakenness.

We lift before thee the limited horizon, the failure to see things in perspective at once both broad and long.

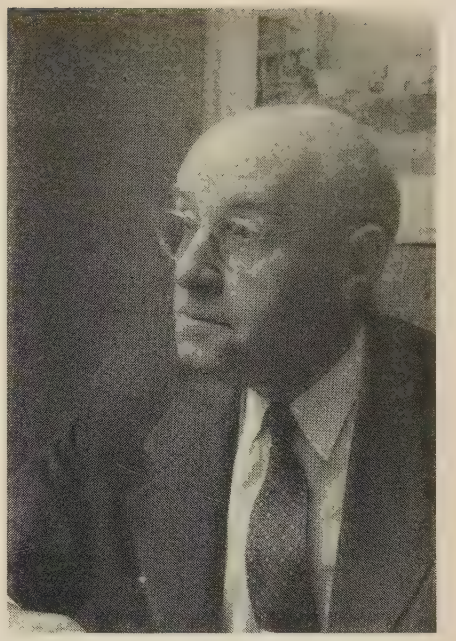
Thou knowest in the beginning what the end shall be. The day shall declare it, redressing the balance, rewarding the faithfulness, winnowing to find wheat.

Give us to see by faith the things which pass; the perfect end when all missing is complete, all that is now becoming comes finally to be; when all shall emerge to see all the way over which we have come and to praise thy name forever and ever through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymn "Once to Every Man and Nation"

Benediction

Organ Postlude



DR. FREDERICK W. ALDEN, WHO LED THE WORSHIP SERVICES

An Exchange of Convocation Greetings

To the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country
Springfield, Massachusetts

Sincerest greetings and best wishes for a fruitful Convocation. We all miss our friend, Don Pielstick.

MONSIGNOR L. G. LIGUTTI
National Catholic Rural Life Conference
Des Moines, Iowa

To the annual Convention of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference
From the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country

As we meet today in flood-stricken New England, we are made vividly aware of the interdependence of city and country and of the ultimate dependence of all men on access to the fruits of the soil.

This experience has heightened our concern, which we know you share, that ways shall be found for effective sharing of American abundance with human need and suffering wherever it is found.

To the patron of your Convention, Bishop William T. Mulloy, to your distinguished Executive Director, Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, to all who attend your Convention and to the on-going National Catholic Rural Life Conference, we extend good wishes for a continuing witness to the values of rural life and a profitable ministry in the name of our Lord.

HENRY S. RANDOLPH, Chairman
Department of Town and Country Church
National Council of the Churches of
Christ in the U.S.A.

Prayer After Painting the Church

• Our Heavenly Father, who art worthy to be worshipped in beauty and holiness, we thank thee that thou dost inspire us to respond to things lovely. We offer our gratitude for all who answered the recent call to improve our church house. For those who helped much or little, for all whose thoughts were for the good of the work, we thank thee.

We find joy in the comradeship which marked our days together and in the enthusiasm which hastened our accomplishment. We need wisdom from thee as the work goes forward. Guide us to exercise good judgment until step by step this house of worship shall outwardly speak of the inner realities fulfilled in those who bow their hearts in adoration of thee. *Amen.*

—MARK RICH

• Life consists not simply in what heredity and environment do to us but in what we make out of what they do to us.

—HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, from *On Being A Real Person*

Rural Welfare Service

(*Continued from Page 7*)

sons they bring a common strength to the undergirding of social welfare needs.

Churches should educate to make the community aware of unmet human needs and to secure the adoption of remedial and reconstructive measures.

In relationship to the problems of agricultural migrants, churches should agitate for: legislation extending to agricultural laborers the same protections as is extended to workers in industry; legislation to prohibit interstate recruitment of farm labor by so-called "labor contractors"; legislation to strengthen the Immigration and Naturalization Service so that illegal alien labor can be eliminated from competition with native workers; legislation to establish minimum housing standards for labor camps and to enforce same by regular policing; revision of existing welfare legislation making it possible for migrants to qualify for assistance, if needed, wherever they show signs of settling, without waiting the usual periods before they can qualify as residents.

Churches should support the extension of the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance program to all rural people.

They should work for the formation of public health departments for counties where they do not now exist.

In relationship to social case work programs churches should work to remove the appointment of social case workers from political influence and help to secure professionally trained social case workers, not only in church related welfare institutions but in others as well.

Churches should seek to secure better laws for the control of child labor and school attendance; and should insist upon a strict enforcement of such laws.

They should study the values of a national standardization of marriage. divorce, custody and adoption laws.

They should help to sponsor mental hygiene institutes.

Churches should inform, sensitize, and motivate their members to make use of resources now available to them. The clergy should become personally acquainted with the professional personnel of rural welfare institutions.

Churches should support whatever social welfare institutions they now possess in terms of the highest social case work and other professional standards. At the present we know that this support in terms of high standards is rarely given. If the church cannot provide the best it should withdraw decently from the field.

Churches may build or provide leadership for building boarding homes for the aged. The principle to be observed here is that the aged should live in a community rather than an institutional setting.

Responsible church families should be encouraged to make homes available for the foster care of children who are under the custody of various child care agencies.

Changes

Since society is continually moving from order to change to disorder and to reorganization, each change brings with it new problems and needs. Therefore, we suggest that the Church should as much as possible steer clear of institutional entanglement in the social welfare field. Programs and institutions should adjust as needs change. The Church many times finds it difficult to change programs that it itself initiates because of the aura which gets attached to them. Furthermore, if it enters into a corrective program, it may become so involved that it can no longer act as the conscience of the community concerning the particular problem. If the Church is to furnish constructive and progressive leaders in the area of social concern for all people, it must not lose its objectivity.

Father La Farge

• Recently the Rev. John La Farge, S.J. celebrated mass to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood and of his reception into the Society of Jesus. Father La Farge, as priest, writer, and editor, has had an interest in rural affairs in the U.S.A., as well as interracial and other matters. He has been associated with the magazine *America* since 1926.

After teaching for a few years, Father La Farge served rural churches in southern Maryland for a long period, in the days before good roads and the automobile. Much of the travel was by water. He organized a special school for Negroes, and taught music to the choirs in rural churches.

Father La Farge had a part in the movement by Roman Catholics in the United States to focus attention on rural issues. He encouraged the organization of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and the compilation of documents on rural Catholic teachings, *The Manifesto on Rural Life* (Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee.)

Speaking to the press on his jubilee, Father La Farge was called a "thoughtful optimist" on race relations. He saw "extraordinary improvement" within the past ten or fifteen years, and an accelerating pace in the progress. He believes that the more pronounced aspects of racialism in the United States will "blow themselves out" within a few years.

Father La Farge has many friends in American communities, including not a few Protestants who are always impressed with his generous personal attitudes, his sense of humor, the maturity and the perspective with which he can engage in fruitful discussion.

—B. Y. L.

The Joy of Doing

• The secret of happiness is in knowing this: that we live by the law of expenditure. We find the greatest joy, not in getting, but in expressing what we are. There are tides in the ocean of life, and what comes in depends on what goes out.

—R. J. Baughan

Writing Team Befriends the Land

LESTER FOX

• Mr. and Mrs. Henry Beetle Hough, editors and publishers of the *Vineyard Gazette,* are poets at heart. And poets are naturally conservationists. They don't like to see any of Nature's handiwork destroyed or damaged.

It's no great wonder, then, that Mr. and Mrs. Hough have won permanent ownership of a silver cup offered by the Dukes (Martha's Vineyard, Mass.) Soil Conservation District to the one doing the most to help in the wise and productive use of soil and water resources.

The cup had to be won three times for permanent ownership. One-time winners have been E. B. Keith, W. W. Piney, A. M. Fischer, and James Cagney, the actor. They all had 1-year possession of the trophy for conservation work they did on their farms.

Ever since they bought the *Gazette* in 1920 when it was 74 years old, the Houghs enlisted the interest of islanders in the good use of their natural resources.

"We've always been interested in conserving our forests and wildlife," Hough said. "Then when the Soil Conservation Service came into being, we learned of the need of conserving our soil and water resources. The coming of the SCS gave us the first definite opportunity to work for the conservation of our natural resources on a comprehensive front.

"It has been a great satisfaction to be able to tie in with the effective leadership the Soil Conservation Service has provided. The SCS has given us a comprehensive program of action that we can put our teeth into. It advanced the whole field of conservation from the theoretical to the practical, from the abstract to the concrete.

"Soil Conservation Service men are out in the field where they can see what's happening and what ought to be done and can be done. They make the whole business of conservation real and immediate."

The Houghs have no farm on which to practice what they preach but they do own a 10-acre piece of land around their home in Edgartown, where they publish their newspaper. They are developing this into a wildlife refuge with the help of Ezra Shaw, the SCS technician for Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

In developing the *Gazette* into a famous newspaper, the Houghs have successfully defied a number of journalistic bugaboos. They have shied away from the nervous, rapid fire type of writing thought necessary in these days of fast living when everyone is supposed to read and run. Instead the writing is leisurely and the general tone poetic. In fact they publish poetry as it comes in, a practice that would give most city editors the horrors. And most of it's good stuff.

The old-fashioned idea of putting advertisements on the front page does not disturb the Houghs. They have a sensible reason for doing so: it enables them to provide a better balance of news and ads on the inside pages.

The Houghs have the odd idea that the public is interested in something besides murders, accidents, scandals, juvenile delinquency, and other forms of abnormal behavior. This sort of news the *Gazette* prints if and when it happens but it's written with a sense of proportion. And with it *Gazette* readers get news and observations about birds and wild flowers, schools, literature, music, the tides, and the little animals of the island. Letters from readers are often literary gems. Islanders traveling abroad send back vivid and mature accounts of their observations. Current events, whenever appropriate, are linked with the colorful past of Martha's Vineyard and its adventurous captains of the sea.

A subscriber's masterpiece on the futility of the tomato as food brings a flood of responses as bright and humorous as the original.

Readers show their interest in this kind of newspaper by subscribing for it in large numbers. The Houghs have increased circulation almost tenfold. Many of the summer visitors, for whom the Houghs publish their newspaper twice a week in July and August, are regular subscribers. Half the circulation is off-island. The *Gazette* goes all over the world.

The Houghs, both graduates of the Pulitzer School of Journalism, Columbia University, provide a training ground for beginning journalists.

"My wife," Mr. Hough said, "has exceptional skill in developing writing talent in others and in disciplining their minds without ruining their enthusiasm and originality."

Peter Bunzel, for example, is a recent *Gazette* graduate. After his apprenticeship there, he went to *Life.*

William J. Jorden had his first newspaper experience as a summer reporter on the *Gazette.* He became Tokio correspondent of the *New York Times.* William Attwood became foreign editor of *Look* and Howard Young went to *This Week.*

Phyllis Meras, a Wellesley graduate, was slated to be a school teacher until she got a taste of newspaper work as a summer vacation reporter on the *Gazette.* She went from the island weekly to the woman's page of the *Providence Journal.*

Then there were the three nieces of the late great drama critic and author, Alexander Woollcott: Barbara, Joan, and Polly Woollcott. All started newspaper careers on the *Gazette.*

Barbara went to the *New York Herald Tribune* and wrote a book, "None But the Mule," before she married John J. Scannell. Curiously enough, Scannell became chief mechanic on the *Gazette* and brought Barbara back to the island to live. They named their home "God's Pocket."

Joan Woollcott graduated to the *Philadelphia Bulletin.* She married Fritz Jennings who teaches in Philadelphia.

Polly Woollcott married an artist, Stan Murphy, who decided that Martha's Vineyard had the right atmosphere for a painter. Like sister Barbara, Polly became a permanent resident of the island.

—From *Soil Conservation,* U.S.D.A. Washington, December 1955

BOOK REVIEWS

Exploring the Small Community. By Otto G. Hoiberg. University of Nebraska Press, 1955. $3.50.

Exploring the Small Community, by Otto Hoiberg, is a vital little book for people who are struggling with the problems of small community life. The author carries out his purpose very well which he expressed as being that of writing "primarily for people of rural communities throughout the nation who are working at the great task of community improvement . . . to help them visualize more clearly some of the paths that are open to them in their quest for richer group living."

The book is the outgrowth of the author's rich experience in working with small communities in search of solutions for their manifold problems. He writes as a man with a lifetime of experience with rural people and as a technician with seven years of intensive community work experience as a staff member of the University of Nebraska.

The book is made up of two parts. Part I is a discussion of the essentials of community improvement with chapter headings of: "understanding the small community"; "community planning: the concept"; "community planning: the practice"; "coordinating community activities"; "diminishing social cleavages" and "leadership development." Part II of the book deals with problem areas such as "business and industry," "community recreation," "the church," "local government," "medical care," etc.

Exploring the Small Community is a book that grows on you as you read it. It begins its discussion of the basics of the subject with little fanfare, but before the reader has gone far, he comes to the realization that Mr. Hoiberg is a man with a message.

The author makes a classic statement concerning the church at work in small communities. On page 117 he writes, "There is a disturbing tendency in many small churches to confuse the essence of the religious institution with its outer manifestations and to safeguard the latter at the expense of the former." He follows the statement with a concrete example which rings the bell of familiarity in the reader's mind since it is so typical of the thousands of town and country communities all over the nation. He sums up with the following: "Both churches are protecting to the death their traditional administrative structures, at the obvious cost of the very work which they were originally dedicated to perform. They somehow do not realize that outward change may be essential to inner stability in a changing world."

Exploring the Small Community is well worth the reading by churchmen and other community minded people. It contains much usable information and directs the reader to a wealth of other material concerning small communities and their problems. The book is well documented so that the reader will find no difficulty in going to the sources for further study.

—Dale W. Medearis

Region Building (Community Development lessons from the Tennessee Valley). By James Dahir. Harper and Brothers, New York. 1955. $3.75.

In this book the author draws attention to a basic problem of modern times: How can social planning be carried on in such a way as to stimulate local and individual initiative? Free men must find a positive answer if freedom is to live in an age of great industrialization and interdependence. After having written three earlier books dealing with regionalism, neighborhood planning, and citizen contribution to planning, Dahir finds a positive answer in the experience of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Dahir is not concerned to analyze the processes by which local communities can become schools of personality. Rather, he assumes such a function as valuable and moves on to discuss the way in which a regional authority can operate to enhance the function. He recognizes that a geographically limited community is insufficient to prevent "the evils of congestion and deprivation." The small local center can achieve some wholeness and individual initiative but it cannot deal adequately with the big economic factors such as transportation, flood control, power production and distribution, industry, markets, employment. In order to plan solution to these large-scale problems in a way to serve people, a team of region and small community is necessary.

The author is searching for the next larger planning unit that includes several communities, one which will still encourage individual development. He rejects the nation and the state as too large or as unrelated to geographic realities. The region seems to meet the desired specifications, allowing a "local patriotism" to diffuse through the parts and to "enlarge spirit of community." In the example chosen, the regional organization is not one built up from democratic grass roots but one imposed by Congressional Action, from above. The Tennessee Valley Authority, however, is a regional organization which seeks and and has sought promotion of democratic values. But, because it was imposed, it may represent a non-typical larger development unit. Unless Congress decides to set up similar authorities, such planning development may have to be built up from local smaller units. Dahir's choice of T.V.A. as a case study could be criticised on this score. On the other hand, his choice is justified as an example of intelligent planning that encouraged local initiative.

Social and economic planning need not move toward dictatorial control or centralization. It can stimulate grass-roots "initiative." The book makes this fact clear. Perhaps case studies of other regional programs would add to the corroboration. Dahir does mention a number of other such efforts in the chapter, "Beyond T.V.A.," but these references are brief and lack detail. The main thesis rests upon the Tennessee Valley experience.

The book can stand on its own merit. Understanding increases, how-

ver, if it is read in connection with ome other accounts of T.V.A., such s Lilienthal's *Democracy on the March*. The whole story has been vell documented in books and magzines. Dahir merely adds a new dinension.

There are eight chapters and all ut the last two deal with the specific egion, giving considerable informaion about the development of paricular towns and cities. These case udies of communities deal with old ities brought to new life and with ewly created centers. There is nough detail presented to provide nderstanding and to allow contrasts o be drawn between the old and the ew. Most other writings on the reion present either the over-all picure and philosophy or engineering nd economic factors. Dahir, in keepng with his purpose, brings the story own to separate communities and heir progress in the face of change nd when stimulated by the Authorty.

The book presents an extensive ibliography covering twenty-five ages and listing some 358 items. For ost readers the bibliography would ave proved more valuable if the uthor had offered an annotated omment upon each listed item. The rray of readings can prove bewilering to those who are new to hinking in the fields under discusion.

Dahir's enthusiasm for the develpment of the South is supported by he evidence. The changes that have ccurred are so great and so imporant that they are perhaps ill-appreiated by inhabitants or those who ave visited often. The observer who an see the dramatic progress is the ne who visits after a lapse of twenty r twenty-five years. Industry is movng in, the countryside is electrified, he mules of yesteryear have been replaced with tractors, roads and omes are distinctly better, people re more healthy, energetic, and selfonfident. There is even evidence hat the old self-inflicted curse of he South, segregation and white suremacy, may be on the way out.

It would be inaccurate to credit ll the constructive changes to the nfluence of TVA. Certainly the leaders of the Authority would deny credit especially on the more controversial questions. Additional contributors to change would be the Rural Electrification Administration, the Farmer's Home Administration, the arrival of many factories, the activity of churches and educational institutions, the rising standard of living during the war, and so on. Dahir is correct, however, in pointing to TVA as the single most important factor contributing to favorable change. It set the pace, provided the impetus and atmosphere for progress.

Beyond the development of a region, TVA is significant as a demonstration that an underdeveloped section can move into the modern world. It can be planned intelligently to serve both local community development and the strengthening of individual citizens. Such a demonstration is exceedingly important in the modern world of rapid change and confused values. Dahir's book constitutes an important contribution to this demonstration. It is a part of the documentation of the TVA story and its meanings for a world in flux.

—William W. Biddle
Earlham College
Richmond, Indiana

The Heart of Nature

• What do you see as you look out your kitchen window? We cannot afford to be indifferent and unappreciative of the wonderful picture the Great Artist is painting on the hills and valleys everywhere. We all need the kind of appreciation that Wordsworth expressed when he wrote:

Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy, for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that never evil tongues,
Rash judgment nor sneers of selfish men
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
is full of blessing.

Luther Burbank, one of the greatest lovers of nature, said, "Children are the most sensitive of all living things—they must be nurtured like plants—for plants and human beings are but different manifestations of the same life forces.

"Cultivate kind, gentle, loving thoughts toward every person and animal and even plants—stars—oceans—rivers and hills. You will find yourself growing more happy each day, and with happiness comes health, and everything you want. . . . Come close to the heart of nature and you will find yourself a better, more honest, and more successful man and woman."

How much richer our lives would be if we had the insight, appreciation and faith in God so beautifully expressed by this unknown poet:

The little cares that fretted me,
I lost them yesterday,
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play;
Among the lowing of the herds,
The rustling of the trees,
Among the singing of the birds,
The humming of the bees.
The foolish fears of what may pass
I cast them all away
Among the clover-scented grass,
Among the new-mown hay;
Among the rustling corn,
Where drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born
Out in the fields of God.

—Aaron H. Rapking

An Indian Prayer

• O Great Spirit: whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me. I come before you, one of your many children—I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make my hands respect the things you have made, my ears sharp to hear your voice. Make me wise, so that I may know the things you have taught my people, the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength not to be superior to my brothers, but to be able to fight my greatest enemy—myself. Make me ever ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes, so when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

—*from Chief Yellow Lark*

Serving Scattered Churches by Air*

CHARLES LEE

• The facts of history will support the thesis that transportation has been a major factor in proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. From the use of the humble donkey, which carried Jesus into the Holy City on Palm Sunday, to the modern "Jet," the salvation of God is proclaimed. Paul used ships of the seas to carry him from port of call to port of call. On the seacoast of Maine ships are used to carry the Christian gospel. Up and down the coast of Alaska a ship is used to bring the "Good News." Our missionaries use "jeeps," oxcarts, river boats, skiis, motorcycles, canoes and airplanes to spread the Word.

The Church's Attitude

The Church has been rather slow in recognizing the important role which transportation plays, perhaps because many of its activities have been centered around the thickly populated areas where the question of transportation did not come up. Be that as it may, the work of the Church has been carried on with the prevailing method of transportation. When everyone used the horse and buggy, the Church used the horse and buggy. When the automobile came along the Church, without hesitation, picked up the keys and rode along. But, beyond this, the Church has had a tendency to frown. Being the great organization it is, it moves quite slowly and deliberately.

On the positive side, however, the Church has attempted to remain sensitive to the general needs of the people. And where it sees a need, it seeks to minister. In recent years the problem of space has come to the forefront. "How can the churches meet the needs of their people in the sparsely populated areas?" Without doubt, it involves transportation.

The Airplane

Think of the millions of man hours that are saved every day by the airplane. Does it not seem reasonable that the Church could well use this saved time? Of course the airplane has its limitations, but the assets far overshadow the defects.

To emphasize this point I would like to tell, briefly, the ways in which the airplane has been of value to me in my parish.

Flasher

The Flasher Larger Parish consists of five churches. The membership of these churches, involving some 220 families, is spread over an area of 2800 square miles. Each of the five churches is located in an established community which has a post office, school, and stores. Each church has its own organization, elects its own officers, and raises its own budget. And we have a Larger Parish Council which is the mainstay of the Parish.

When I came to this parish some three and a half years ago I knew that an adequate ministry could not be carried on by one man if he used only an automobile. Since I had been a pilot during World War II I thought this would be a good way to use my experience. Before long, I bought an airplane for less than a thousand dollars and began to use it for calling. One look at the terrain of North Dakota and you realize that landing is not a major concern. (North Dakota has been called the natural landing field in the United States.) Since I had been conducting services in all five churches each Sunday, the airplane was a real help. The churches took on a new sense of importance in the eyes of many people.

Opening Doors

Not only did the airplane help me greatly in my work of calling and preaching and give a sense of importance to the church, it also opened a door that would otherwise never have been opened. It is not unusual for the winters in North Dakota to be severe, leaving t roads blocked for weeks at a tim Such was the case two years ago. O day as I flew over a home south Flasher I noticed a woman wavi frantically, so I circled and lande When I reached the house the wo an came running out to meet m and told me that her little daught had suffered an attack of append citis. Her husband was out in t barn getting the team ready to ta her out to the highway to catch ride to town. We quickly bundl the little girl up in some war blankets and I flew her to the hosp tal, some forty-five miles away. less than an hour she was on t operating table. The doctor told m later than another half hour wou have been too late. This family ha pened to be Roman Catholic, b they never ceased to be grateful, an I had found a way to minister that community which otherwise would never have found.

This is only one of the many e amples of how the airplane h helped me with my work in t Flasher Larger Parish.

Conclusion

I am aware of the fact that w cannot start issuing airplanes every rural minister in the gre plains area. I am further aware the fact that all ministers cannot do not want to fly. By the sam token all ministers cannot or do n want to become rural ministers. B there are men who could increa the effectiveness of their ministry b using an airplane, if they were e couraged to do so. It is becomin true in nearly every other field—wh not the church?

Convocation Report

• The report of the 1955 Convoc tion on the Church in Town an Country, held at Springfield, Mass chusetts, October 18-20, is now read for distribution. It may be procure from your denominational directo of town and country church wor or from the Department of Tow and Country Church, Nation Council of Churches, 257 Fourt Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., fo 30 cents per copy.

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* From an address before a conference on Sparsely Populated Areas, Bismarck, N. D., 1955.